Sport.

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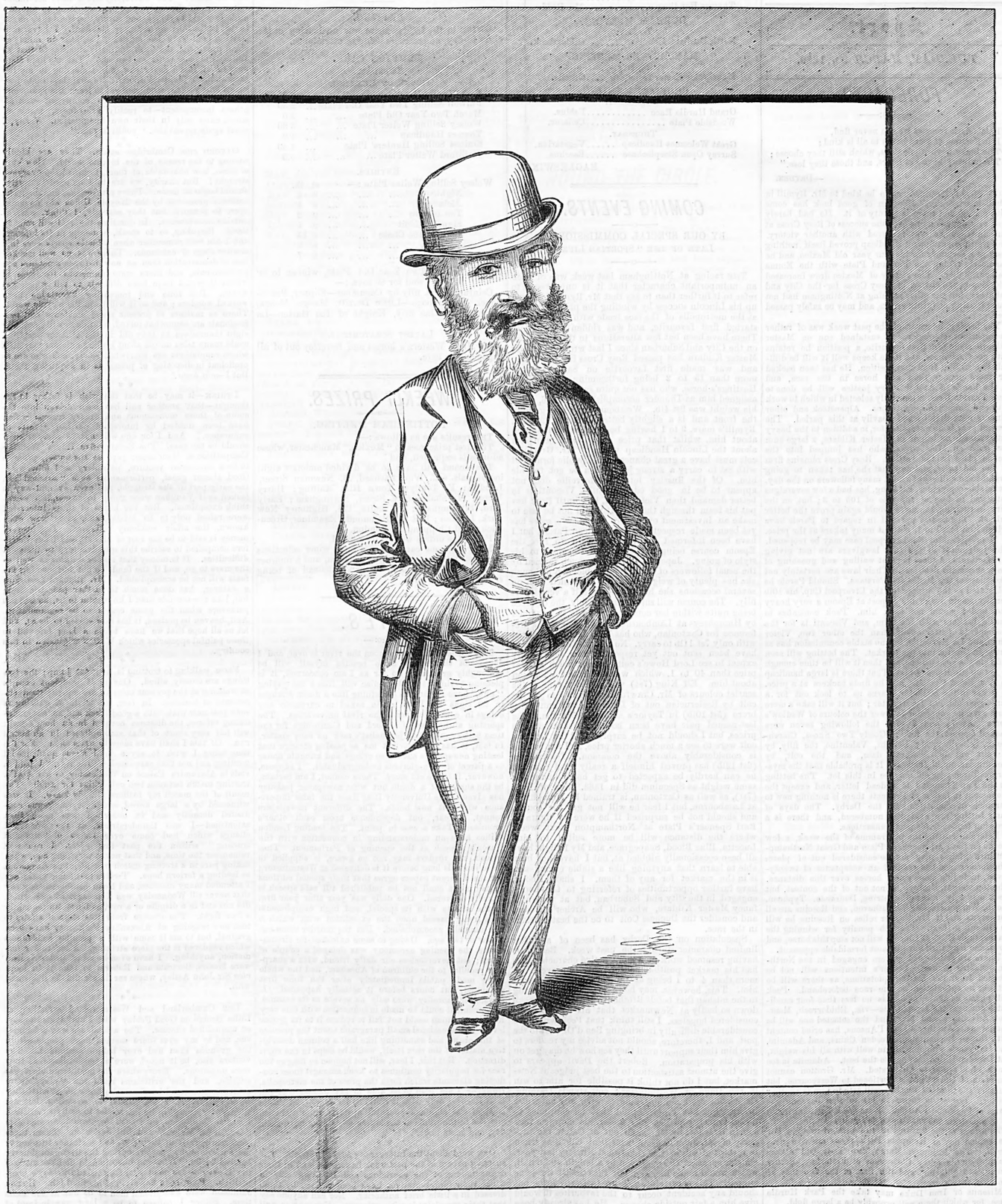

JOLLY SIR JOHN.

Sir John Dugdale Astley, Bart., M.P., the subject of the above cartoon, was born in 1828, and is the eldest son of the late Sir Francis D. Astley, Bart., of Everleigh, Wilts, by Emma Dorothea, fourth daughter of the late Sir T. Buckler Lethbridge, Bart., M.P. He succeeded his father in 1873, having in 1858 married Eleanor Blanche, daughter and heiress of the late T. G. Corbett, Esq., of Elsham Hall, Brigg, Lincolnshire. Sir John entered the army at an early age, and was a Lieutenant-colonel in the Scots Guards, being also M.P. for North Lincolnshire, and there can be no doubt that he will be a member for this division of the county in the next Parliament. Sir John Astley has been for many years a patron of the Turf, and at first trained with the late R. Drewitt at Lewes, when he raced under the assumed name of Mr. Thelluson, and partook in the triumphs of Blackdown, who won the Goodwood Stakes in 1863, Ballyedmond, and other good horses trained by Drewitt at that period. He was one of the first to discern the merits of G. Fordham, the famous jockey, to whom he has at all times been a constant friend. In his younger days Sir John was a good sprint runner, and, at his own distance, could beat most of the amateurs of his day. He has also been a steady supporter of pedestrianism to the utmost of his power, particularly where endurance was to be tested, and in the kindest manner held a helping hand to E. P. Weston and O'Leary when they came over here from America and started long distance walking in this country. It was also owing to the patronage extended by Sir John that Rowell, the long distance champion of the world, was brought out, and having visited New York defeated all comers there in a six days' mixed competition, realising a handsome independence for himself. Sir John is an all round sportsman, taking a great interest in coursing, whilst his match with Mr. C. Alexander at Newmarket in the July Meeting, last year, where he rode his horse Drumhead, carrying 16st 6lb, and beat Mr. Alexander on Briglia (16st), showed that he was no novice in the pigskin. Although not pretending to be an eloquent speaker he is most constant in his attendance in the House of Commons, particularly when country business is under discussion. He has for many years been a member of the Jockey Club, of which august body he has also been steward, and has been distinguished for his zeal and activity in all matters connected with the Turf, of which he is deservedly one of its most popular members. After his connection with Drewitt was severed Sir John placed his horses under the charge of C. Blanton at Newmarket, and at present they are trained by Joseph Dawson at Bedford Lodge, with the exception of his old favourite Scamp, who is still quartered at Epsom.

LETTER-WRITERS.

Communications intended for insertion in SPORT *must be accompanied by the writer's name and address, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.*

R. P.—The paper is too small for a programme, but we have this week included the names of the races. ——SCRUTATOR.—Not practicable at present.—— J. R. H. C.—No room at present. Thanks.——T. O. —The names of the horses must be written on the coupon—not on letter paper.——J. BRAZIER, J. NORTON, T. BOLLINGTON, and R. RIDGE are informed that their coupons arrived too late.——BEND D'OR.— Our selection for the Derby will be made known in due time.

Sport.

TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 1880.

FORECASTS.

—:o:—

"Fate's dark recesses we can never find,
But Fortune at some hours to all is kind;
The lucky have whole days, which still they choose;
Th' unlucky have but hours, and those they lose."

—DRYDEN.

FORTUNE is determined not to be kind to Mr. Rymill in a half-hearted way. His turn of good luck has come with a rush, and there is plenty of it. He had barely time to count his gains over the success of Rosy Cross at Lincoln when he was favoured with another victory. The Nottingham Spring Handicap proved itself nothing short of a certainty for his four year old Mexico, and he was nearly taking the Portland Plate with the Emma Melbourne filly. The victory of Mexico drew increased attention to the chance of Rosy Cross for the City and Suburban, but the other running at Nottingham had not much bearing on future events, and may be safely passed over.

The betting, however, of the past week was of rather an important character. A sustained run on Master Kildare made him first favourite, a position he retains with great firmness, and if he keeps well it will be difficult to oust him from that position. He has been backed for more money than any horse in the race, and in the hands of Archer every justice will be done to him. Passion Week is generally selected in which to work City and Suburban commissions. Alpenstock and other winners were first backed heavily at this period. The present year is no exception, for, in addition to the heavy outlays made on behalf of Master Kildare, a large sum has gone on Westbourne, who has jumped into the second place in the betting. Rosy Cross remains firm at the old price, and now that she has taken to going straight she will count a good many followers on the day. Her stable-companion, Elf King, has had a few sovereigns entrusted to him at the rate of 100 to 3; but, on the Lincoln running, the mare should again prove the better animal. The tactics pursued in regard to Parole have driven him to 20 to 1, without many takers at the price. It is possible that the Liverpool case may be reopened. The judgments of the turf lawgivers are not giving satisfaction, and there is great wailing and gnashing of teeth at certain decisions. Their laws are certainly not like those of the Medes and Persians. Should Parole be reinstated as the winner of the Liverpool Cup, his 10lb penalty would make his impost at Epsom a very heavy one, and I would not back him. Peck continues to puzzle backers with his team, and Visconti is for the moment in better odour than the other two, Victor Chief and La Merveille, but no stable commission has as yet been thrown into the market. The betting will soon indicate the selected one, and then it will be time enough to get on the Russley best. That there is large handicap in Blue Blood I believe, and he finds backers at a price. A writer in the *Observer* warns us to look out for a three year old, not Toastmaster; but it will take a more than average youngster to lower the colours of Wadlow's horse. At 7s and 7 to 1 the following seven were backed against the field:—Goody Two Shoes, Clarencieux, Schoolboy, My Delight, Valentino, the filly, by Hermit out of Musket's dam, and the colt, by Rosicrucian out of Duchess. It is probable that the mysterious three year old may be in this lot. The betting on the Two Thousand is a dead letter, and except the movement in favour of Draycott there is nothing new to chronicle in connection with the Derby. The days of early betting are evidently numbered, and there is a growing tendency for post transactions.

Before discussing the programme of the week, a few words on the Earl Spencer's Plate and Great Northamptonshire Stakes may not be considered out of place. The former race has secured an acceptance of twenty-seven, including some smart horses over this distance. The top weight, Rosbach, is not out of the contest, but Peck may rely on his other string, Douranee. Typhoon, Monk, Warren Hastings, Strathavon, and Roscius are all dangerous, and if Mr. Rayner relies on Roscius, he will be difficult to beat. The 5lb penalty for winning the Yarborough Plate at Lincoln will not stop this horse, and Douranee may turn out his most formidable opponent.

There are some good stayers engaged in the Northamptonshire Stakes. Owner's intentions will not be gleaned from the betting quotations, as there will be little or no speculation on the race beforehand. Peck will puzzle us again, as he has no less than four candidates amongst the acceptances—viz., Rhidorroch, Moorfoot, Adventure, and Mar, and the selected one will be dangerous. Another stable, I'Ansons, has cried content with three—Roehampton, Dresden China, and Adamite, and last year's winner will run well with all his weight, but Dresden China may prove the best. Adamite is too much of a rogue to be trusted. Mr. Gretton cannot complain of the weight apportioned to Westbourne, but whether the limited market will satisfy him is another matter. The issue seems to me to rest between the teams of Peck and I'Anson. Next week I shall no doubt be in a position to speak more definitely.

To return to the fixtures of the present week. For the second day at Kempton Park there are five races closed. The Kempton March Two Year Old Stakes includes in its entry the names of Fetterless, Border Queen, and Pilgrim, and the first of the two may be the most trustworthy.

Misenus or Iron Duke may take the Park Hurdle Race, for which there will probably be a large field.

The Staines Hunters' Plate I will leave to The Owl and Laird of Glenorch.

The top-weight, Sunburn, is not out of the Thames Handicap, and either he or Mr. Dodd should win.

The North Durham Handicap on the second day at Durham has Umbria, Mars, Omega, Bargee, Skelgate, Maid, and Gildersbeck engaged, and I fancy the chance of the last-named.

There are five races closed for the second day at Manchester, the principal one of which is the Manchester Easter Handicap. The horses engaged are but a moderate lot, and Concord or Othello may turn out the best of them.

The new meeting at Enfield will, no doubt, be a great success this holiday time; but backers had better reserve themselves for post investments. Miguonne or Royal Charlie will probably win the Potter's Bar Plate.

There are too many meetings this week, and the horses are so often engaged, and in numerous cases at two or three different places, it is unusually difficult to predict winners. The Croydon authorities have issued a monstre programme for Wednesday and Thursday, but I will only examine the chief events. The Grand Hurdle Race to-morrow should go to Fabius, if he can keep clear of Cannon Ball.

The Cellarer is very leniently handicapped for the Woodside Plate.

The Great Welcomes Handicap on Thursday may fall to Antient Pistol or Vegetarian.

The Surrey Open Steeplechase will be an interesting race if Bacchus, Regal, Jacka', and Austerlitz come to the post. The top weight will be the best to trust.

There are other fixtures, but it is too hazardous to risk an opinion about them.

SELECTIONS.

KEMPTON PARK.

To-Day.

March Two-Year-Old Stakes ....Fetterless.
Park Hurdle Race.....Misenus.
Staines Hunters' Plate .....Owl.
Thames Handicap.....Mr. Dodd.

DURHAM MEETING.

To-Day.

North Durham Handicap.....Gildersbeck.

MANCHESTER MEETING.

To-Day.

Manchester Easter Handicap ....Othello.

CROYDON MEETING.

WEDNESDAY.

Grand Hurdle Race .....Fabius.
Woodside Plate .....Cellarer.

THURSDAY.

Great Welcomes Handicap .....Vegetarian.
Surrey Open Steeplechase .....Bacchus.

EAGLESWING.

COMING EVENTS.

—o—

BY OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER,
LATE OF THE "SPORTING LIFE."

—o—

THE racing at Nottingham last week was of such an unimportant character that it is unnecessary to refer to it further than to say that Mr. Rymill followed up his Lincoln success by winning the principal event at the metropolis of the lace trade with Mexico, who started first favourite, and was ridden by Mordan. There have been but few alterations in the quotations on the City and Suburban since I last wrote on it, but Master Kildare has passed Rosy Cross in the market, and was made first favourite on Saturday, not more than 15 to 2 being forthcoming about Lord Hastings's horse, who has not quite such a severe task assigned him as Thunder accomplished in 1876, when his weight was 9st 4lb. Westbourne has also gone to the front and is a slightly better favourite than Mr. Rymill's mare, 9 to 1 having been taken and offered about him, whilst that price could have been had about the Lincoln Handicap winner. Mr. Gretton's colt must have a great chance on his public form, and with 8st to carry a strong jockey can be got to ride him. Of the Russley lot, La Merveille does not appear to be in good odour, whilst Visconti is in better demand than Victor Chief, but until Peck has put his team through the mill it would not be safe to make an investment on any of them. No more has yet been made respecting the American Parole, but I have been informed that he is certain to run, the Epsom course being particularly well suited to his style of going. Japonica (8st 6lb) is much fancied by the usual followers of the French stable, and although she has plenty of weight it cannot be denied that on several occasions she has proved herself a very smart filly. The course will suit her admirably, the distance being quite within her compass. Of the pair trained by Humphreys at Lambourne I have a decided preference for Caxtonian, who has been leniently treated with only 7st 11lb to carry. No commission appears to have been sent out yet respecting him, but I fully expect to see Lord Howe's colt reach a much shorter price than 40 to 1, which was the latest quotation about him. Elf King (7st) will again represent the scarlet colours of Mr. Crawfurd, who has also got the colt by Rosicrucian out of Duchess (6st) and Sombrero (5st 10lb) in Taylor's stable at Manton. The last-named pair have been both backed at outside prices, but I should not be surprised if the Duchess colt were to see a much shorter price, as I am told he is considerably above the common. Toastmaster (6st 12lb) has proved himself a really good colt, but he can hardly be expected to get home under the same weight as Speculum did in 1868. Sun of York (7st), as well as Caxtonian, is trained by Humphreys at Lambourne, but I fear he will not get the course, and should not be surprised if he were to figure in Earl Spencer's Plate at Northampton next week, where the distance will be more suited to him. Lucetta, Blue Blood, Scapegrace, and My Delight have all been occasionally nibbled at, but I have not been able to learn that anything like a stable commission is in the market for any of them. I shall, I hope, have further opportunities of referring to the horses engaged in the City and Suburban, but at present I fancy Master Kildare, who will be Archer's mount, and consider the Duchess Colt to be the best outsider in the race.

Speculation on the Derby has been of a rather limited character during the past week. Ben d'Or having resumed work of a more active character, has had his market position considerably improved, not more than 4 to 1 being at present obtainable about him. This, however, may be in some measure owing to the mishap that befell Brother to Kisber, who broke down so badly at Newmarket that his case may be considered hopeless. I still think that Peck will have considerable difficulty in bringing Ben d'Or well to the post, and I, therefore, should not advise my readers to give him their support until they see how he may get on with his preparation. Robert the Devil appears to give the utmost satisfaction to the best judges at Newmarket, but I do not think it possible for him to win if the Duke of Westminster's colt stands training. Of Beaudesert I am not able to give any authentic information, but I understand that he continues to please Porter, who has also under his charge a nice colt in Draycott by Nuneham out of Coton, the property of Mr. John Gretton, who beat Gil Blas when in receipt of 8lb in the Goodwood Nursery last year. On this occasion Draycott won by a length and a half, which would make him and Gil Blas nearly the same animal. This is certainly not up to Derby form, but should any accident occur to the favourites it would give him a fair outside chance. He has already been backed for considerable sums down to 25 to 1, and is likely to see a still shorter price.

So many race meetings have been arranged to come off this week that Turfites will find a difficulty in deciding where they will go. In the metropolitan district Kempton Park and Enfield commenced to-day and will be continued over to-morrow, whilst Croydon is fixed for Wednesday and Thursday, and military races will be held at Bromley on Friday and Saturday. Durham, Manchester, and Packington Park are also on the list for this week, but not being gifted with ubiquity I must confine my remarks to some of the events to be decided at Kempton Park and Manchester to-morrow. The course at Kempton Park is in excellent condition, and as good entries have been obtained some capital sport may be expected. The Staines Selling Hunters' Plate should be won by THE OWL, and in the Kempton Park March Two Year Old Plate I prefer the chance of PILGRIM, who is likely to have made some improvement since he made his *debût* at Lincoln. The Park Hurdle Plate is likely to bring out a numerous field, but HIGHLAND MARY strikes me as possessing the best chance, and in the Thames I prefer MR. DODD, whilst OLD OXONIAN, if in any form, should land the Haliford Welter. At Manchester, in the Eastern Handicap, to-morrow, DELUDER should be able to get home; and in the Handicap Hurdle Race I cannot see anything likely to beat CANNON BALL; whilst TENTERGATE, who has run well this year, but has been rather unlucky, should win the Spring Steeplechase, as the stake will be sufficiently valuable to induce his owner to send him from Middleham. The Short's Welter Handicap I shall assign to BUMPKIN.

Monday night.

LATEST ENTRIES, &C.

—o—

BETTING.

OWING to the holiday there was no betting at the clubs to-day, no members being in attendance.

KEMPTON PARK.

TUESDAY.

ORDER OF RUNNING.

Park Hurdle Handicap...	...	2.0
Fulwell Selling Two Year Old Plate ...		2.30
March Two Year Old Plate		3.0
Wolsey Selling Welter Plate		3.30
Thames Handicap		4.0
Staines Selling Hunters' Plate	...	4.30
Halliford Welter Plate		5.0

ENTRIES.

Wolsey Selling Welter Plate :—	st.	lb.
Nightcap	9	4
Æolade	9	4
The Gowan	9	2
Signal de Nuit	9	1
Lord of the Chase	8	13
Saratoga	8	9
Baveno...	8	7

Fulwell Selling Two Year Old Plate, winner to be sold for 80 sovs. :—

Ceinture, Dora, filly by Cucumber—Slipper, Practitioner, Chattanooga—Little Dorritt, Madge, Mouga, Margery Gelatine filly, Knight of the Garter—La Rosalie.

LATEST SCRATCHINGS.

All Mr. S. Western's horses and Beverley out of all engagements here.

WEEKLY PRIZES.

—o—

NOTTINGHAM MEETING.

THE results are as follows:—

The first prize goes to "Mexico," Manchester, whose address is requested, and

The second will have to be divided amongst eight individuals, viz., Wm. Barnard, 23, Newman Street, London; E. Tomlyn, Town Hill, Malling; Harry Victor, 11, Shakespeare Street, Nottingham; Early Bird, Birmingham; M. Smith, 171, Highbury New Park, London; T. R. B., Richmond; Examiner, Greenwich; and Chippendale, London.

Post-office orders will be forwarded.

Many coupons came in too late; some selections were not written on the printed form, and a number of letters were delivered by hand, instead of being sent through the post.

NOTES.

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THE battle of the Blues upon the river is over, and I doubt not that many more besides myself will be thoroughly grateful. So far as I am concerned, it is pleasing to think that the zodiac will, like a bad-paying "pub," have undergone something like a dozen changes in its signs ere I am again asked to chronicle any doings in connection with the rival universities. The sporting authorities of Oxford and Cambridge for the time being render the journalist's task no easy matter. In fact, it has often struck me as passing strange that leading newspapers should so cringe and knuckle under to a parcel of vain-glorious undergraduates. I suppose, however, it is the old story. There cannot, I am certain, be the shadow of a doubt but what newspaper jealousy has given to the University Boat Race the false importance which it now holds. The different newspapers cannot, I fear, put dependence upon each other's promises. Take a case in point. The leading London dailies have an understanding in connection with the Queen's Speech at the opening of Parliament. That speech, my readers may not be aware, is supplied to these journals long before it is delivered at Westminster; but the different papers agree that their special editions containing it shall not be published till said speech is actually delivered. One daily was year after year first in the streets with its special, and high compliments were freely passed upon the expedition with which it was annually accomplished. But the murder came out a year or two ago. Owing to some unlooked-for circumstance, the opening ceremony was delayed a couple of hours; but nevertheless our daily friend, with a sharpness peculiar to the children of Abraham, had the whole thing made public immediately after the time first appointed, but hours before it actually happened. If newspaper morality were only as severe as its censure, an agreement could be made in connection with this very Boat Race which could not fail to reduce it to its proper level. An occasional small paragraph anent the practice of the crews and something like half a column descriptive matter of the race itself, would be steps in the right direction. But this, I fear, will not happen so long as the race for popularity continues so keen amongst those conflicting elements which form the press of the metropolis. However, I am glad to be able to say good-bye to the Boat Race—I only wish it could be for ever—and I take leave of the eighteen youthful upstarts from the Cam and Isis in the words of the laureate—"They have their day, and cease to be."

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ONE word about the Intervarsity Athletic Sports. The sporting papers of the past week have been loud in their denunciations of the capricious and insulting way in which their representatives have been treated by those dressed in a little brief authority. Nor can anyone say that their complaint is without cause. You may as well ask a reporter to produce what he has never heard as expect him to describe what he has not seen. This is the strong standpoint of the dissatisfied scribes; but they at once lose all the advantages which accrue from this position when they attempt to spin out a weary narrative about matters of fact of which they loudly proclaim themselves ignorant. Such a course is neither dignified nor deserving of sympathy. Of all the leading journals the *Field* alone seems, to my mind, worthy of commendation. *It* does not beat about the bush, nor does *it* halt between two opinions. *It* understands that such a meeting took place, but owing to there being no facilities offered by the management to the Press, *it* cannot give a report. The *Field* has set a good example; let other papers follow it. They can then lay the flattering unction to their souls that they have deserved success, even if they have not been fortunate enough to command it.

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I HAVE during the week received several letters relative to my remarks about the starting at these sports. One or two are of my way of thinking, but the majority agree in pronouncing my strictures unduly severe. Just so, my masters. But I still fancy that I know more about practical athletics and a starter's duties than do those who are attempting to sit in judgment on me. I have no right, say my critics, to judge amateurs by the same standard as I would professionals. Perhaps I have not; but let it be borne in mind that there are amateurs and amateurs, and that the Oxford and Cambridge heroes do not consider themselves amateurs of the common stamp. In London there are gentlemen who have made athletics their special study, and who are possessed of considerable knowledge of this particular department of sport. Yet mere University tyros quietly pat these authorities on the back, put them to one side, and arrogate to themselves functions which wiser and better men would never think of assuming. Have these striplings ever heard of the proverb which credits a certain class of persons with rushing in where angels fear to tread? The University Clubs have set themselves up as the only persons competent to put the athletic world to rights, and surely therefore they ought to be judged by no ordinary standard. I have seen starting (and very bad starting, too, bear in mind) at small provincial meetings infinitely superior to that at Lillie Bridge a week or two ago. Let me here state once for all that I never saw worse starting in my life than at these identical sports. Nevertheless these presumptuous youths, who have yet to learn the rudiments of athletics, consider themselves competent—and all others incompetent—to rectify grievances, many of which exist only in their own imagination. Verily, I must again repeat that "youth is vain."

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OXFORD *cum* Cambridge again. They are kindly coming to the rescue of the bicycle world. How kind of them, how charitable of them, to thus keep everyone straight! But charity, we are told on good authority, should begin at home. Those *professional* and *amateur* contests promoted by the Bicycle Union are no doubt open to censure, but they scarcely, I think, warrant outside interference. In due time the evil will remedy itself. Bicycling, so to speak, is merely in its infancy, and I can well remember when athletic sports were in a similar stage of existence. There was no well marked line of demarcation then as now between amateurs and professionals, and there were numerous instances in which it would have been difficult to tell which was which. But time and increasing knowledge have worked wonders; and so it will be in the bicycle world. There as matters at present stand amateurs and professionals are somewhat mixed, but things will gradually right themselves as they did in the athletic world. I could many tales unfold about leading amateur bicyclists whose reputations are somewhat shady, and who are as proficient in disposing of prizes as in acquiring them. But I—*cui bono?*

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I THINK—it may be that the wish is father to the thought—that another nail has been driven into the coffin of those monotonous and dreary tramps which have been dubbed by interested parties, "tests of endurance." And I for one will not be sorry if such should be the case. The Seventy-five Hours' Walking Competition at Manchester gave at the outset, promise to be a successful venture, pecuniary and otherwise. Good, almost great, performances were "notched" in the early part of the struggle, and even at mid-way it looked as if Vaughan were going to accomplish something exceptional. But the hopes of those interested were raised only to be blasted, and, as is now well-known, the affair suddenly collapsed. The love of money is said to be the root of all evil, and I am therefore compelled to ascribe this misadventure to financial difficulties. It is money that makes walkers as well as the mare to go, and if the funds be not forthcoming the feats will not be accomplished. Mr. Richard Lewis, as a caterer, has done much to further pedestrianism; but, like the sensible man I know him to be, he will not persevere when the game ceases to be remunerative. And, heaven be praised, it has now ceased to be so, and let us all hope that we have taken a long farewell to those painful spectacles which Weston originated in this country.

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FROM walking to trotting is no great jump; the two things are closely allied. Our most proficient experts at walking at the present moment are equally good exponents of trotting. In fact, the style of walking is such just now that, with a good track and an accommodating referee, the distance covered in an hour's walk will fall very short of that accomplished in an hour's run. Of this I shall have more to write anon. For the time being I wish to say a word about quadrupedal trotting, and not that associated with bipeds. I paid a visit to Alexandra Palace on Wednesday to assist at a trotting match between two celebrities for £200. The result of the match my readers already know. It was witnessed by a large crowd, and everything was conducted decently and in order. I was more than astonished—I was thunderstruck, at the wonderful change which had come over lovers of "tits and trotting" within the past few years. I can well remember the time, and that not so very long ago, when taking part in a trotting match was about as dangerous as leading a forlorn hope. Twelve to fifteen years ago I attended many matches, and I can conscientiously say that never till Wednesday was I present at one which did not end in a dispute or a row, and not unfrequently a free fight. The change from this state of affairs to that now reigning at Alexandra Park may have been gradual, but to me it came with a peculiar suddenness which rendered it the more striking. After this reformation, anything. I have even hopes of pedestrianism were Messrs. Bertram and Roberts to take it in hand *vice* Sir John Astley, whose services could be dispensed with.

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THE Cumberland and Westmoreland wrestling at Lillie Bridge on Good Friday was, I am pleased to say, an unqualified success. The attendance was a bumper one, and to my eyes there seemed more people within the grounds than had ever before assembled. The visitors also, be it noted, were as enthusiastic as they were numerous. Everywhere the northern dialect was audible, and the criticisms upon the "play" were evidently expressed by those who knew about what they were speaking. I am partial to wrestling, but not sufficiently versed in its intricacies to be hyper-critical. I was very intimate with such bygone heroes as Jim Scott, Dick Wright, and Bill Jamieson. These three were non-pareils in their day, and a cleaner thrower or more accomplished performer than the first-named never entered a ring. What sad havoc would he have made of the Eleven Stone men who took part in Friday's competition. Poor Dick has also got his final fall. He and Jamieson were exceptional men to be out at the same time. Either I believe to be a long way in front of George Steadman, and George, I am assured, is as a champion fully up to the average.

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THOSE clever people who know more than their neighbours keep piling up the agony about the Sculling Championship. All agree that Hanlon is both willing and able to defend his title against all comers, but there is considerable difference of opinion as to the one who shall be so fortunate, or unfortunate it may be, to measure blades against him. Trickett is disposing of his hotel in Sydney, and intends lowering the Canadian's colours on some water in this country—is the dictum of one know-all. There may be truth in this, but I fear also there may not. The gigantic Colonial was lucky in scoring the win he did—a fact of which I think he is shrewd enough to be cognisant. He will find Hanlon vastly different from Sadler. American advices, on the other hand, state that the Hop Bitters squabble will be brought to a final issue very shortly, and that Courtney and the Champion are sure to meet, when it is possible that a third party, by name Riley, will also shy in his castor. I pity the pair. On the authority of Elliott himself he will cross the herring pond, and have a cut

in. If he makes judicious second-class matches his trip may be remunerative, otherwise he had better stay at home. I have got a most decided opinion upon this rowing Championship, and that opinion I am willing to support. Setting aside the Hop Bitters affair, I am willing to bet that the first genuine Championship match will be between Hanlon and Boyd, and I am satisfied that the chance of bringing back the title to the old country is not so remote as many believe.

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I SHALL wind up for the week with billiards. To-morrow will be a red letter day in the history of the board of green cloth. Mitchell, the most recent, and, according to many, the most wonderful, spot striker, will for the first time try his nerve for a money stake. Different this from a handicap or a public exhibition. His right hand may not retain its cunning when £200 is at issue. As good plucked ones as he have broken down when this crucial test came to be applied. A match is said to be half won when it is well made. Then by all means Mitchell ought to win easily, as on paper he has far and away the best of it. What on earth Cook was about in throwing away 200 points passes my comprehension. He had only to bide his time to get on at level terms, but when a man is eager for the fray haste sometimes gets the better of judgment. And I am strongly of opinion that it has been so in this instance.

SIXES AND SEVENS

—o—

BEING A MORSEL OF A COMEDY BY A PAIR OF THEM.

SCENE I.—*A conservatory fitfully and dimly lighted by the moon, opening at back into a brilliantly illuminated ball-room, in which gaily-dressed dancers are seen and music heard. As the curtain rises the music and dancing cease. Enter from back* FRANK PHILLIPS *with* ALFRED AUSTIN, *both flushed with dancing and in full evening dress.*

ALFRED. } What a delightful
FRANK. } What a charming
partner you had!

FRANK. Very true, my dear fellow, charming and delightful were they both.

ALFRED. And both dressed exactly alike—sisters, I suppose? You seem to know them well.

FRANK. Yes. I met them last autumn on board one of the Rhine boats. You danced with the elder—her name is Louise. I danced with May. The gouty old gentleman in the corner who spoke to me is their father—a retired sea-captain named Holt—Nicholas Holt.

ALFRED. And that fat old lady in crimson and perspiration, who dances and fans herself so vigorously, quivering in the arms of her partner like a well-shaken jelly, she, I suppose, is old Nic's partner. Mrs. Holt must find it awfully hot.

FRANK (*laughing*). Alf., don't be wicked. Mrs. Holt has been dead these two years. The fat old lady you mean is Mrs. Holt's cousin, Miss Macfarline. (*Laughing.*) You want a wife. There's a chance for you Alf. The good old girl has lots of chips. At present she keeps house for the Holts.

ALFRED. I wish there was a chance for me with her niece Louise. (*Sighs.*)

FRANK. And I wish there was a chance for me with her niece May. (*Sighs.*)

ALFRED. Frank, you're hit.

FRANK. Alf., I am, clean through the heart! How are you?

ALFRED. Hit, too, and in just the self-same place. (*They walk apart.*)

Enter lady and gentlemen dancers.

FIRST LADY TO FIRST GENTLEMAN. How deliciously cool it is here.

SECOND LADY TO SECOND GENTLEMAN. The quiet moonlight and the motionless shadows of the plants seem quite romantically strange and weird after the music and glow, the swift motion and glitter of the ball-room. Don't you think so?

(*Enter* LOUISE HOLT, *with* MISS MACFARLINE, *who, very fat, red, and hot, is fanning herself energetically, to whom, in dumb show,* FRANK *introduces* ALFRED.)

FIRST GENTLEMAN. And how refreshingly sweet is the pleasantly monotonous musical dropping and plashing of the fountain.

SECOND GENTLEMAN (*languidly*). Ya-as, it is a—as—er you say—exactly. (*Puts up eye-glass, and looks vaguely about.*)

(*Enter* MAY HOLT.)

MAY (*to* LOUISE). Ah! here you are, and here is aunty, too, and my last partner, now quite our old friend, Frank Phillips.

MISS MACFARLINE. This, May, is Mr. Austin, a gentleman who is one of Mr. Phillips's friends. (AUSTIN *bows.*)

LOUISE. And my last partner (*Bows. All retire towards ball-room.*)

ALFRED. And, I hope, your next. (LOUISE *consults her card.*)

FIRST GENTLEMAN. Well, no, I don't; but then, you know, they say ladies are like larks, most easily attracted by a looking-glass; and, as you observe, I don't reflect.

FIRST LADY (*advancing.*) If they are you men should not complain; for if women are often before the looking-glass, the reason is only anxiety to please your ungrateful sex.

(*Exit all except* MAY *and* FRANK.

FRANK. I can't tell you how delighted I was to find you well and in good spirits. Do you remember the evening on which your father first invited me to this house? I shall never forget it—never!

MAY. It was the evening of our parting at Cologne.

FRANK. And you, May, when I spoke of my flame, perpetrated that cruel little joke about my initials, F. P.—fire-plug. Don't you remember?

MAY. But you had your revenge in that very paltry election joke about creating a new M.P. Don't you remember?

FRANK. Yes; and I challenged you with gloves, having surreptitiously obtained your size—six—from the maid. Do you remember the promise you then made?

MAY. Promise?

FRANK (*taking her hand tenderly*). Yes, dear May, your promise to answer the momentous question I then put by a silent signal of assent. Give me that silent signal now, darling Give me your glove, dear, and let me ask papa.

(MAY *breaks from him, and runs away with a merry laugh.* FRANK *pursues her into the ballroom. Music strikes up and dancing recommences. Enter* SECOND LADY *and* GENTLEMAN.)

SECOND LADY. I do believe you are the author of those quite too naughty verses in the *World*.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. No, 'pon word—don't remember quite; a—but—a—really don't think I—a—did; as a—a—matter of fact nevare do—a—write for—a—the papers.

SECOND LADY. They were quite too awfully clever; just like you!

SECOND GENTLEMAN. Clevare—oh, ya-as! But—a—really—a—don't think—er—did; don't think I—a—evare saw them, really. [*Exit*, R.

(*Enter* ALFRED *and* LOUISE.)

ALFRED (*earnestly*). Give me your glove, a ribbon, a flower, anything that you have worn, and let me bear it near my heart!

(*Re-enter* SECOND LADY *and* GENTLEMAN.)

MR. HOLT (*at door of ballroom.*) Louise!

LOUISE. It is my father! I'll come again. (*Exit into ballroom.*)

SECOND LADY. Oh, she only laughs to show her teeth!

SECOND GENTLEMAN. 'Deed! Really now—a—thought she was—a—don't you know—a—(*looking vaguely about*)—merry. (*Exit into ballroom with lady.*)

Enter FRANK.

FRANK (L). The moon is behind a cloud. The conservatory is quite dark. Ah! Here she comes!

Enter LOUISE.

LOUISE (R). I am terribly excited—can hardly speak—at last the great event is near. I feel as if I should faint. He is certainly going to propose.

FRANK (*crossing to* R). You have come back. I thought you would. Am I to be made happy? Will you give me the glove? This darling, dainty little glove, perfumed and warm with the glow and sweetness of that soft white hand! May I? (*Gently takes the glove from her hand.*) You relinquish it—willingly? (*Passionately and joyously.*) Ah! my love, my darling—believe me, the devotion of a life——

Enter MISS MACFARLINE *from ballroom, calling* LOUISE.

LOUISE (*whispering*). Go away, go away. It is my aunt.

[FRANK *passionately kisses her hand, and exit*, R.

MISS MACFARLINE. How dark it is. Is that you, Louise? You've taken my gloves in mistake for your own. Come, my dear, we are going down to supper.

[*Exit*, C.

LOUISE. Poor fellow! How small a favour will make a lover happy. I'm coming, aunt.

[*Exit* LOUISE, C.

Enter MAY, L. (*She speaks, and he replies in a whisper.*)

MAY. Are you there?

ALFRED (*re-entering*). I am.

MAY. I am going down to supper with papa.

ALFRED. Will you not give me something?

MAY. You don't mean a glove—of course?

ALFRED. I do mean a glove—of course.

MAY. Oh! Well, then, I suppose you must be accommodated. Little things please little minds. Take it! (*Throws down glove, and runs away laughing.* ALFRED *catches up the glove, waves it in triumph, passionately kisses it, and exits, pressing it to his heart.*)

SCENE II. *Bachelor's chamber in the Middle Temple.* FRANK *discovered with glove.* (*Door* C.)

FRANK. I kissed it the last thing before I fell asleep—it was the first thing to meet my lips this morning. Here it is. But, gracious heavens! am I mad—am I dreaming? May's gloves are sixes—these, oh, horror!—these are sevens! It was very dark—I could scarcely see her face. Have I made a mistake? Is it possible? (*Knock at door.*) Come in. (*Paces the stage excitedly.*) Come in, hang you! Come in! *Enter* ALFRED.)

ALFRED. What's the matter?

FRANK. Don't know—how are you? What's the matter? You look happy.

ALFRED. And you most unhappy. What's wrong?

FRANK. Can't tell. Daren't guess. Sixes and sevens—sixes and sevens. (*Groans.*)

ALFRED. What are you talking about?

FRANK. A glove.

ALFRED. A glove—just what I came to tell you about. I have a glove—a lady's.

FRANK. What size?

ALFRED. Sixes.

FRANK. Sixes! Sixes! Whose—whose were they? Tell me, tell me quickly—speak!

ALFRED. Don't frighten a fellow. Miss Holt's?

FRANK (*gasping*). Miss—Miss Holt's—she gave you—sixes? Which one?

ALFRED. The right.

FRANK. The wrong! Oh, heavens! Louise wears six-and-a-quarter. May wears sixes. All my hopes in life are blighted!—blighted!—blighted! Frank, you have slain me!

ALFRED. It's all sixes and sevens to me. Why what have I done? What does it all mean?

FRANK. Sixes and sevens! Sixes and sevens! I shall never recover the shock.

ALFRED. What shock?

FRANK. Oh, that glove—that glove—it never belonged to her! (*Turns suddenly upon* ALFRED.) Now, sir, tell me—she gave you her glove?

ALFRED. How could she if it never belonged to her; but she did.

FRANK. As a token that she accepted your love?

ALFRED. I hope so.

FRANK. And the size was? (*anxiously.*)

ALFRED, I have it here. (*Takes out glove, kisses, and examines it.*) I thought so—sixes!

FRANK. Ten thousand thousand devils torture you as you have tortured me! As you have a soul to be saved, sir, answer me truly! Did you make love to May Holt? Did she give you that glove as a token of returned affection?

ALFRED. I fervently hope, and really think, she did; but whether her name is May—or what was the other's name, as I was not familiar enough to use it—I don't remember.

FRANK. Heaven save and comfort me! My brain is in a whirl! my heart is bursting! May wears sixes, Louise wears six-and-a-quarter.

ALFRED. Ah, that's the name—Louise!

FRANK. And these (*producing glove, which he throws down and stamps upon*) these accursed things are sevens!

ALFRED. I seem to know that glove. Let me look at it. (*Picks up glove.*) Hum!—a peculiar colour. There was not another pair like them at the ball. (*Smells it.*) Cleaned and mended. Yes, I thought so. Frank, these gloves belong to the Scotch lady, Miss—what's-her-name—I mean the fat old cousin who keeps house for them.

FRANK. So they do! (*Laughs*) I remember them now. Why! but how the deuce! (*puzzled*) Well it was dark, certainly; but, No! no! no! perish the thought, it is too dreadful to contemplate! Oh, heavens! I can't marry sevens. No! no! I never could have mistaken her short squat figure for the slender and graceful outline of my beautiful May. Oh! impossible! Besides, (*hopelessly*) I can't understand it.

ALFRED. I might easily enough have mistaken May for, what's her name, the other one—the one I like best, you know—Louise.

FRANK (*eagerly*). That's true! that's true! So you might, so you did, probably. And she you for me. A good thought! We are of exactly the same build and height, eh?

ALFRED. Just so, and the conservatory was almost dark. I never intended to be your rival, Frank, upon my soul and honour, I didn't.

FRANK. True, Ha! ha! I begin to breathe again! Ha! ha! ha! (*abruptly changing*) But wait, how's this? (*pauses*) You may have had one of the sixes instead of the six-and-a-quarter; but, (*solemnly*) sevens! sevens! Ah! that the calamity. (*Despondingly.*) Sevens. How the devil do you get over sevens! (*Walks up the stage shaking his head.*)

ALFRED. Let us call upon the Holts.

FRANK. A good idea.

SCENE III.—*Same as Scene 1, by daylight. Enter from room* C. P., MAY *and* FRANK *laughing, followed by* LOUISE *and* ALFRED.

MAY (*whispering* R). Nothing of the kind. Papa was calling me to supper, and I threw the glove towards you. (FRANK, R., *produces glove*). That—no, that's aunt's. She wears sevens, and you know well enough that I never wear anything larger than sixes.

FRANK. Then, how did I get this?

MAY. How can I tell? Perhaps to make quite sure of getting one of us, you proposed to aunt as you did to me, throwing aside my poor little six to keep the larger prize. She's very rich.

FRANK. But I took it myself from your hand.

MAY. That you did not.

LOUISE (L). I never threw my glove, sir. You may have stolen it.

ALFRED (L). But here it is. (*Shows glove triumphantly.*)

LOUISE. That! Nonsense! That glove was never mine.

ALFRED. Not yours! Why you threw it to me as you went down to supper.

LOUISE. That aunt can disprove. For it so happens that by mistake she took my gloves, and left her own in their place. If you have my glove perhaps she gave it you as a token of encouragement. Young men have been sweet upon aunty ere this. She's very rich. Here she is. (*Crosses stage to* MAY.)

[*Enter* MISS MACFARLINE.

ALFRED (R). } Have you lost a glove, Miss Mac-
FRANK (L). } farline? (*Each produces a glove.*)

MISS MACFARLINE (C). I suppose I have, for this is mine. But this belongs to you, May. But I must have lost that, too, for now I bethink me——

MAY. You did not throw it to anybody? (*Slyly.*)

MISS MACFARLINE. You must have lost it, Louise, when I took your's by mistake.

FRANK. By mistake! Aha! I see! I see! (*Laughs.*)

MISS MACFARLINE. What do you see? (*All laugh.*)

ALFRED. Nothing, my dear madam. We have all been, as the saying runs at

SIXES AND SEVENS.

MORAL.—When you propose to a lady do so by daylight, and whether you do or do not, remember all rights are reserved by the writer.

ROUND THE CIRCLE.

No appointment made by the present Head of her Majesty's Government has ever been so popular—in the widest and best sense of that much-abused word—as that which was given to Mr. W. H. Smith, when he was asked to discharge the duties of First Lord of the Admiralty. Up to that period it had been supposed by those unacquainted with the real character of the Conservative Chief that high social rank, great political influence, and a long pedigree were among the best passports to that favour and confidence which would induce Lord Beaconsfield to recommend an untried man to a position of so much importance in the State. Great, therefore, was the surprise felt by a considerable number of people when Mr. W. H. Smith became a Cabinet Minister. But there is no reason to suppose that mingled with that surprise there was any shade of discontent, even among those politically opposed to the right hon. gentleman. His high intelligence, lucid reasoning, honesty of purpose, great business faculty, and invariable courtesy to everyone, had already won for him "golden opinions from all sorts of persons." He has now discharged the duties of his office for a sufficiently lengthened period to prove that the confidence reposed in him has not been misplaced.

***

I HAVE just been reading the address which the First Lord of the Admiralty has issued to the electors of Westminster, whom he has represented in Parliament for the last twelve years. It bears the impress of that simplicity of character, frankness of nature, and directness of purpose which belong to the best intellects. Mr. W. H. Smith is as certain to be again elected Member for Westminster as are the Conservatives of a great victory at the coming General Election.

***

LORD BEACONSFIELD has been charged with making war against a neighbouring country. The announcement is a little startling; but such is actually the charge made against him by the Home Rule Confederation in its recent manifesto from the neighbourhood of London Bridge. That very eloquent but somewhat excitable association has recently, by the voice of its executive, informed the Irish nation that "The Prime Minister of England has issued, in the guise of a letter to the Irish Viceroy, a declaration of war upon you, your country, and your friends." Until this statement was made public, we benighted Saxons were under the pleasing delusion that both her Majesty's Government and the Viceroy, the latter through the amiable exertions of her Grace of Marlborough, had accomplished much of late for the relief of the distressed in the Green Isle; but we now learn, in effect, from this cheerful manifesto of the executive, that "a despotic and rancorous Minister" has sanctioned all these efforts for the relief of Ireland "in order to drown disaffection in the blood of the people"—meaning the Irish people, of course. "Vote against the unscrupulous intriguer," cry these Home Rulers; "vote against him whose character was so exactly divined by the great O'Connell when he detected and denounced the faithless adventurer."

***

WELL, this is pretty strong language on the part of the Home Rule Executive, but the recipient of it has survived harder words than those of which I have just given a specimen. Indeed, they are mild and almost complimentary compared with those once used by Daniel O'Connell himself to the present Prime Minister, who was vehemently denounced by the agitator as a lineal descendant of the impenitent thief on the Cross.

***

IN those days political rancour generally found vent in furious abuse. Even the *Times* was not infrequently influenced by the prevailing scurrility of the period. The great newspaper of Printing House Yard was not ashamed to call Thomas Babington Macaulay, Mr. Babble-tongue Macaulay. Indeed, I saw the other day an old copy of the *Times*, in a leader of which, speaking of Shiel and Macaulay when they were sworn in Members of the Privy Council, was the following sweet flight of fancy:—"These men Privy Councillors! These men petted at Windsor Castle! Faugh! Why, they are hardly fit to fill up the vacancies that have occurred by the lamented death of her Majesty's two favourite monkeys."

***

COLONEL SYNGE and his wife, as everybody knows by this time, have been released from captivity by that most estimable robber, Niko, who seems to be the direct successor of Edmond About's humorously-drawn Hadji-Stavros. Besides the trifling sum of £12,000 which Niko has received, this worthy Greek has stipulated for the pardon of his father, his brother, his uncle, his nephews, and a number of particular friends who, from time to time, have got into trouble owing to that national defect in moral vision which renders the average Greek quite unable to distinguish the difference between *meum et tuum*. Indeed he has, under all the circumstances, managed the affair in a manner equally creditable to his head, his heart, and his pocket.

***

WITH further experience, however, the excellent bandit will no doubt do better for himself and his relatives. When next he makes an important capture—the pardon he himself has received can be of little moment to him, as he intends to continue in the business—he will very likely insist on a high title being conferred upon him, and his generous nature may even induce him to stipulate for the ennoblement of all his relations who have deserved well of their country by diverting some of that wealth which belongs to other people from its legitimate channel in order to enrich a horde of men as dirty as they are dissolute and dishonest.

***

HERE is an advertisement which my eye fell upon the other day, but without receiving any serious injury:—

"Mrs. Flynn informs her clients and patrons that she has removed to her new offices, No. —, Agar Street, Strand, W.C. Mrs. Flynn has purchased the *Matrimonial T——s* and the *Matrimonial A——r*, which will be published fortnightly in connection with her business. All applications for Matrimony must be accompanied with references, as a proof of being *bonâ fide*. Mrs. Flynn has the highest testimonials from nobility, gentry, and tradesmen."

***

YES, "the nobility and gentry of the Borough Road," as the circular of Sam Gerridge expresses it in "Caste." Will anyone favour me with a few photographs of the noblemen and gentlemen who have selected their wives from the collection in Agar Street? I am curious to learn if the length of these men's ears is quite as long as their pedigree.

***

IT isn't every woman who is capable of catching a burglar and of making a joke over it. A few days since Mary Grant,

"In the dead waist and middle of the night,"

was aroused by a crash of glass, and discovered a man in the parlour, crouching in a corner, with his head covered with her sister's ulster. This ostrich-like attempt at concealment of course didn't succeed; indeed Mary Grant seems to have become so indignant at this "weak invention of the enemy," to quote the late Mr. C Cibber, that she forthwith unearthed—or, rather, unulstered—him, and invited the intruder to assume an upright position with the highly encouraging words, "Come out, you brute!"

***

BROUGHT before a police magistrate, the luckless burglar ventured to cross-examine the courageous Mary. "Wasn't I fast asleep when you found me?" asked the prisoner. "No, you were *wide awake*, and I was also, thank Providence," replied Mary, promptly.

***

MR. JOHN HULLAH having made a tour on the Continent at the request of the Education Department of the Social Science Association, has published the conclusions he has arrived at as to the condition and progress of musical instruction in various countries which he has visited. On the whole, Mr. Hullah is of opinion that elementary knowledge here will bear favourable comparison with that of most other Continental nations.

***

BUT Mr. Hullah does not fail to tell us that in several places, notably both in Holland and Belgium, it is a very common experience to find "children of the humblest class of ages from nine to ten, who can not only sing what they have learned with taste and refinement, but sing at sight passages of considerable difficulty."

***

IN short, the burden of Mr. Hullah's argument is that every male and female child in this kingdom should be taught the notes of music at the same time, or thereabouts, that the alphabet is learnt.

***

WHY? Does a knowledge of music ensure the wisdom, the refinement, the health, the happiness, or the moral culture of anybody? It is the fashion among a great number of people to think that it does most of these things: but such a belief is not the less fallacious because general. "It is sufficiently evident," says Ruskin in his "Modern Painters," that there is no process of amalgamation by which opinions, wrong individually, can become right merely by their multitude."

***

THE late Mr. Peace, whose last appearance was on the scaffold within the walls of one of Her Majesty's gaols, was extremely fond of music, and played the violin with great taste and feeling; but I am strongly of opinion that the memory of those who were the victims of that murderous burglar is more respected than his own.

***

LET me tell a little story which I know to be true. A few years ago Mr. A., of Liverpool, married a Miss B. They lived together in apparent harmony for three years, and three olive branches graced their home. Then came the *res augusta domi*, and one day, when all their household furniture had been sold, Mr. A. suddenly disappeared from his distressed wife and her little ones.

***

A YEAR passed, and then came the news to Mrs. A. that her husband had been seen at the close of an opera season singing in the front rank of the chorus at Covent Garden. The wife, who had been earning a scanty subsistence for herself and the children by "taking in plain sewing," vainly tried to trace her husband. But when April again came round Mr. A. once more appeared at Covent Garden, this time in a small but distinct part, for he had been taught to sing at sight from his earliest youth, was a capital musician, and had a good voice. The forsaken wife, on hearing of this engagement, wrote to her husband imploring him either to return or to send her some immediate assistance, as she was in dire want, and had been very ill. To this letter, and to a second which was sent, no reply was vouchsafed.

***

THE feeble wife, surrounded by her gaunt children, went on sewing—and starving. One night in the depth of winter she sat by the fire stitching "with eye-lids heavy and red." At last those lips closed, her hands fell motionless into her lap; she dozed, lurched forward, and fell—into the fire.

***

SHE died of her burns on the following day, and so ends my history of a clever musician's wife.

***

LET me see, was there not something publicly said the other day of another clever musician's wife? But let that pass.

***

I SHOULD like to observe, however, that the most decided case of idiocy I ever met with outside the walls of a lunatic asylum was that of a musical composer of considerable repute; and, further, that the most shameless knave I ever encountered played, and continues to play, the organ exquisitely.

***

I HOPE nothing that has just been said by me will lead anyone to infer that I have not a keen—indeed I may say cutting—appreciation of the influence of music.

***

THE popularity of the dramatic works of the late Andrew Halliday appears to have increased rather than diminished by the lapse of time. Within the last few days no less than four different adaptations of his might have been seen at four metropolitan theatres, and the plays of this writer are in still greater demand in the provinces.

***

I AM certain that very few things are so conducive to health as a walk before breakfast of five miles out and five miles back—on one's *own* land.

***

IN a recent speech at Westminster the First Lord of the Admiralty said, "I conceive that a Civil servant is bound to give his whole time to the service of his country." Unfortunately that is just what they are not bound to do. I wonder how many small papers and magazines are edited in the War Office, for instance.

***

I HEAR that the Tower Hamlets Radical Club keeps its own poet. It is rather to be regretted that the club in question doesn't keep him from writing also. One hardly knows which to admire most, the rhyme or the rhythm of the following:—

"Here lies the Government of light and leading,
It lived for years by blundering and thieving;
It managed constantly to pay its way
By borrowing money from day to day."

I shouldn't think the versifier who penned the above doggerel would manage constantly to pay *his* way if he depended for a living on the sale of his poetic fancy.

***

HER MAJESTY'S gifts on Maunday Thursday reached sixty-one, a number corresponding with the age of the

illustrious lady. I take this opportunity of mentioning that in two years time the Queen will have reigned as long as Elizabeth, who occupied the throne for forty-five years.

***

Mr. Kenealy, or rather Dr. Kenealy as he used to insist on being called, has appealed to the electors of Stoke-upon-Trent for money to pay the expenses of the coming election contest in the Independent interest. He reminds those wiseacres who last sent him into Parliament that he paid his own election expenses on that occasion, and urges that he can't afford to do so again. Then let him withdraw his candidature, for it is clear he is not independent enough for the position he seeks.

***

Besides, where is the Arthur Orton that he has often promised to bring over from Australia? And how is it that the author of "Prayers and Meditations" has quite ceased to exert himself on behalf of "the unhappy nobleman now languishing in Dartmoor prison?" I know there would be considerable difficulty in producing Orton on the hustings at Stoke, but that difficulty may be easily surmounted if the pending application for the release of the Claimant should be successful.

***

Shelstone Cranks, as everybody in Little Green Street knows, is engaged to the lovely and accomplished Sophia Stubbs, the only daughter of the wealthy baker at the corner of that fashionable thoroughfare. Was it not natural then that Shelstone should invite the girl of his heart to join in some of those festivities common to Easter Monday? At length, cloyed with such pleasures, he entered a restaurant, the splendour of which took his fancy, and resolved to spend his last half-sovereign on a dinner worthy of the wealthy baker's daughter.

The Waiter: "Vat vill you 'ave, sare?"

Shelstone Cranks (with conscious dignity): "I'll leave that to you, garsong. But let everything be nice."

Everything *was* nice, except the bill, which came to one pound fifteen shillings, exclusive of the waiter's fee.

***

The last piece that Mr. Sothern purchased from Mr. Gilbert having proved a failure, I learn from the interesting theatrical notes of Mr. Moy Thomas that the author, in order to make amends to "Lord Dundreary" for his loss, has just sold him a new fairy comedy in three acts, for which the reduced charge of three thousand guineas is to be paid. Fifteen years ago the very utmost which would have been paid for a work of that class would have been three hundred pounds down.

***

This reminds me of a little history that I can give to the world of a play which has delighted many hundreds of thousands of the public, and will probably continue to do so for years to come.

***

A few days after E. A. Sothern had been introduced to the late Thomas William Robertson, the coming dramatist, who was destined to make the fortune of Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, received an invitation from Sothern to lunch at the Cedars, as the comedian's house at Kensington was then named. When the appointed day came, Robertson called for a friend that was to accompany him, and observed, doubtfully, "I have put the MS. of 'David Garrick' into my pocket; perhaps I may, if an opportunity offers, prevail on Sothern to let me read it to him."

***

After luncheon at the Cedars, and the production of the inevitable box of regalias, Robertson brought out his dog-eared MS., which had been offered and rejected at a score of theatres, in spite of its being an adaptation from the French. Nowadays a work of Gallic origin would no doubt fare better. He had no difficulty in obtaining leave to read it to his host, for Mr. Sothern has a keen eye for anything that looks like business, whether on or off the stage.

***

The third act was but half read when Sothern said, "I'll have that play acted; Garrick will just suit me."

"Acted in America, you mean?" inquired Robertson.

"In America? No. I mean at the Haymarket Theatre."

"Ah, it will not be played there," rejoined Robertson.

Sothern took a long pull at his cigar before he asked, "Why not?"

"Because Buckstone has already rejected it," was the reply.

***

But, thanks to Sothern, the play was at last produced at the Haymarket, and proved one of the two most successful pieces that have been brought out at that house for the last quarter of a century.

***

I heard yesterday that the managers of the Vaudeville Theatre have determined to sweep their house clear of "Cobwebs" with as little delay as is consistent with getting another piece properly rehearsed.

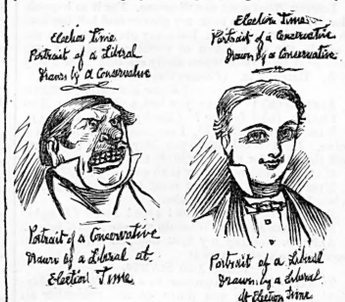
***

I am not the dramatic critic for this paper, but I may mention that I have heard more than one opinion expressed about the new comedy at the Vaudeville. There is no serious interest whatever in the plot, the dialogue is pointless, and most of the characters are ridiculously unreal. It may be that Messrs. James and Thorne don't want any serious interest in the story of a comedy, but I rather think they will find their audiences *do*.

THE CHARITABLE GRINDER.

TALKING

of the General Election—and just now who is not talking of it? How curious and strange it must seem to the calmly observant and impartial few who note its rabid, vapid, energetically-worked-up fury and froth. Every source of local or personal dissatisfaction is nursed, strengthened, and utilised by the craftiness of wandering electioneering agents. An excited party politician who displays the slightest regard for honesty



and truth is scarcely to be found; slander abounds. Without a thought of common decency or common fairness mud is thrown from either side. "Foul is fair, and fair is foul." Every petty local prejudice, and even personal dislike, however mean or paltry, is tortured, twisted, and distorted to serve a party purpose. Here are a few illustrations.

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At Exeter, for the convenience and protection of the public, it was recently ordained that the cabmen should wear numbered badges such as their brethren in London have worn for many years. The proud provincial cabmen were indignant and angry. They called meetings, and straight in stepped the party politician to assure the cabmen who have votes that this was only another attempt made by "the Tories" to degrade and enslave true-born Britons in Devonshire. So now "The Great Badge Question" is added to the more exciting features of the general election. Exit Exeter.

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A London penny illustrated contemporary, with an enormous circulation, accuses "the Beaconsfield Ministry" of dishonouring the country "by tamely paying a ransom of £12,000 to the Turkish brigands for the liberation of Colonel Synge." The right spirited Liberal course would, I suppose, have been a proclamation of war against Turkey at a little greater cost, or that of allowing the brigands to cruelly murder the colonel, while we saved our pounds.

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This same professedly Liberal thinker expresses astonishment to find that the Marquis of Hartington's address "was quite smart and epigramatic, wonderfully so for the son of a duke." Considerately adding, however, "He couldn't help being the son of his father," and condescendingly concluding with "He," the Marquis, "comes to us, let the people remember, with the hall-mark of John Bright's hearty approval"—a distinction almost grand enough to destroy "the repressing influence of being heir to a dukedom." The owner of the paper containing these opinions has long written M.P. after his name, and is now seeking re-election.

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The Liberals are making much capital out of last year's Army Discipline Act, and quite dramatic was the sudden display of "a cat" to the electors of Westminster by one who conveniently forgot that Mr. Gladstone passed flogging clauses in his Mutiny Bill every year from 1868 to 1873, and that last year the late Government merely so modified these same Gladstone flogging clauses that now this most cruel and degrading punishment stands only as an alternative to the punishment of death. Fair play is a jewel. If flogging in the army and navy is to be condemned—I think it is—both Conservatives and Liberals are blameable—the last named most.

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One of the dailies strives to show that even Civil Service stores would not exist if the Tories were out of power.

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All these things are bigly bad, but here is a bad Biggar. It is easy to laugh at pat-riotous Mr. Biggar's, M.P., M.T., obscure, but unmistakeable, hint of someone organising here that cowardly system of terror and assassination with which he associates the name of Hartmann in Russia, if Ireland, with full power to elect M.P.'s who can do anything they wish done, elect Mr. Biggar's political opponents; but something more should be done. He may be more fit for a lunatic asylum than a prison, but he is certainly unfit to be honoured with a place in the House of Commons. Is there another civilised country under the sun in which he would have the chance of re-election?

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Here are the observations above referred to. They were made by Mr. Biggar. In responding to the toast of "The Irish Parliamentary party" at the Sunday evening banquet to Mr. Parnell, and they are quoted from the *Cork Constitution*:—"It was within the province and the power of the Irish members of Parliament to do anything they wished. If they really were in earnest, and if those who had the power and the privilege of selecting members of Parliament would select and support the right sort of candidate, they would have all the reforms they wanted;" but "if the present constitutional course which they were pursuing in Parliament did not succeed in getting the rights they wanted for Ireland he thought that Ireland would be able to produce another Hartmann, probably with a much better result." Probably much *better*. Where out of Great Britain could such a stupid and insulting speech be made with impunity?

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I am glad the cowardly ruffian who can threaten the life of an amiable, innocent, and illustrious lady in England, because in Ireland his political views are unpopular, is not a countryman of mine. Mr. Biggar knows who that ruffian is—I don't. I am going to guess.

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And talking of a ruffian recalls to my memory a Nottinghamshire paper, the *Express*, which supplies another instance in which "history repeats itself." In this paper Mr. Thornton was reported to have applied the word "ruffian" to a political opponent, who wrote to deny his having used that very offensive term.

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The *Express*, however, maintains he *did* use the term, for this conclusive reason, because the "*reporter has it on his notes.*" Do you remember the following extract from the trial scene from "Pickwick?"

"Judge: What is your name?

"Mr. Winkle: Nathaniel, my lord.

"Judge: Daniel. Any other name

"Mr. Winkle: Nathaniel, my lord.

"Judge: Nathaniel Daniel, or Daniel Nathaniel?

"Mr. Winkle: Not Daniel at all, my lord, only Nathaniel.

"Judge: Then what did you tell me it was Daniel for, sir?

"Mr. Winkle: I didn't, my lord.

"Judge: But you *did*, sir, *or how could I have got it on my notes?*"

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There in another *apropos* passage in those cynical remarks of Horace Walpole, which were after all not so far out, seeing what we see, and hearing what we hear amidst the frantic scrambling and fierce struggling of these rival candidates for—hem!—honour and your votes.

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Walpole wrote, "No great country was ever saved by honest men from arbitrary power, because men of virtue will not go all the lengths that may be sufficient to inspirit a party." I have been many years in the world, but I never submitted to the indignity and degradation of inspiriting a party with a view to being elected an M.P. You may put that on my gravestone, by-and-bye.

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Neither the Reform Act of 1832 nor that of 1868 have been perfectly successful. It is feared that bribery is rampant in Ipswich, as violence, which is only another kind of bribery, is still rampant in Nottingham. When Mr. J. Collins told the electors that the Liberal candidate had asserted his intention of not spending money, one in the crowd cried out, "He must not come here, then." Whereupon the learned speaker rejoined, "Well, gentlemen, the expression that has just been given utterance to crossed my mind, too, and I wondered if he was not going to do that, why he came here at all, and I thought that probably he might find out that Brummagen nickel would not be accepted at Ipswich in lieu of the current coin." (Then ensued laughter, and cries of "Bravo.")

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But, with all the striking changes wrought in purifying our system of election, political parties remain much as they were.

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Here is an extract from a newspaper of 1819:—"The self-called Whigs talk admirably, and if nothing more were wanting for correcting the abuses of administration than the penning of abstract essays, and the pouring forth of beautiful and warm and patriotic speeches, then the Whigs would do the business to admiration. But, somehow or other, it happens that the hearts of those who speak so well misgive them, and their hands are paralysed whenever they are brought to the test of action."

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This wasn't nice for the Whigs, even then beginning to be called Liberals; but the same writer, who claimed perfect impartiality, had nothing nice for the Tories of his day, for he says, "The Tories have been identified with taxation, profuse expenditure, invasion of rights, and all the other political ills."

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"The Radicals, the system-and-speech-making Radicals, who sound their own praise, or are angry at their own disappointment," he says, "considered as a political party in any other way than as they sometimes give a false colour to acts of oppression, and at all times degrade the people, and diminish their chance of obtaining anything like substantial reform, are not worthy of a single moment's thought."

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The Whigs being indolent and unworthy of trust, the Tories being active and powerful, but careless of the people's welfare, and the Radicals altogether dangerous and mischievous, what course did this old-fashioned political journalist advise the electors to adopt?

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He said, "Whatever ground of thankfulness there may be to the present Tory administration of Britain, is due to them not as Tories, but as men, not as members of a certain party, but as individuals of a certain temperament of mind, which they cannot hand down to their successors in office. Englishmen should therefore be upon their guard, lest they transfer to those high monarchical principles which are contrary to the spirit of the British Constitution, that homage which is due to individual character, and by ascribing to a system that which is due only to the individuals they find themselves enthralled and at the mercy of less able and honourable men." That warning is as valuable now as it was sixty years ago.

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All political parties have changed, and changed greatly, since the above words were applied to an election, directly after which Sir Manasseh Lopez, Bart., was tried for bribery, convicted, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment and a fine of ten thousand pounds. In 1820 Lord John Russell vainly moved in the House of Commons for a remission of his punishment.

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The Jews are prohibited by their religion from voting on the seventh day of the Passover, on which day the pollings in many of the boroughs will take place.

COLLOQUIA.

AT THE PLAY.

—o—

"Cobwebs" at the Vaudeville Theatre, on Saturday night, with its feeble dialogue, disconnected incidents, and hackneyed characters, failed to win the approbation its very careful production and excellent acting fairly merited. Mr. David James and Miss Larkin, without overstepping that line which divides the broad caricature of farce from the legitimate domain of comedy, provoked repeated bursts of laughter, and the rest of the characters were so vague in outline and wanting in relief as to defy the strongest efforts of those entrusted with their personation. The early hour at which this copy has to be written, to avoid trenching upon that holiday which no body of men earn more fairly than do working printers, must this week plead for brevity in our dramatic notices.

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At Drury Lane this evening "Lady Audley's Secret" will introduce Miss Louise Moodie in a part for which the provinces awarded her unstinted praise.

DIFFERENCES OF OPINION

—o—

KEMPTON PARK.—TUESDAY.

March Two Year Old Plate.—*Sportsman*—Fetterless or Border Queen; *Bell's Life*—Border Queen or Hackness; *Sporting Gazette*—Fetterless; *Era*—Fetterless; *Sporting Life*—Pilgrim or Cremona colt; *Sunday Times*—Border Queen or Fetterless.

MANCHESTER.—TUESDAY.

Easter Handicap.—*Sportsman*—Deluder or Othello; *Bell's Life*—Leven or New Launde; *Sporting Gazette*—Othello; *Era*—Othello or Deluder; *Field*—White Poppy or Knight Templar; *Sporting Life*—Concord or Othello; *Sunday Times*—New Launde.

CROYDON.—WEDNESDAY.

Grand Hurdle.—*Sportsman*—Fabius or Squeaker *Bell's Life*—Fabius or Cannon Ball; *Sporting Gazette*—Post Haste or Cannon Ball; *Era*—Fabius or Misenus; *Field*—Cannon Ball or Post Haste; *Sunday Times*—Blue Ruin or Fabius.

Woodside Plate.—*Sportsman*—Strathavon or Microphone; *Bell's Life*—Cornet; *Sporting Gazette*—The Cellarer; *Era*—Echo II. or Strathavon; *Field*—Echo II. or The Cellarer—*Sunday Times*—Star and Garter or Saphira.

Selling Steeplechase.—*Sportsman*—Keyhole; *Field*—Peroration or May.

THURSDAY.

Great "Welcome's" Handicap.—*Sportsman*—Antient Pistol or Countess Murray; *Bell's Life*—Fabius; *Sporting Gazette*—Mantlet or Kingfisher; *Era*—Antient Pistol or Friar Rush; *Field*—St. Augustine or Vegetarian; *Sunday Times*—Coralie or St. Augustine.

Surrey Open Steeplechase.—*Sportsman*—Bacchus or Jackal; *Bell's Life*—Bacchus; *Sporting Gazette*—Bacchus; *Era*—Bacchus or St. George; *Field*—Regal or Bacchus; *Sunday Times*—Bacchus.

WEEKLY PRIZES.

Conditions.

The Proprietors of Sport offer every week to those who select the greatest number of winners—

£5

in prizes, divided into two portions:

£3, 1st Prize,

and

£2, 2nd Prize.

The next competition will be in connection with

NORTHAMPTON MEETING

(6th and 7th April).

To the gentleman who selects most winners at this Meeting £3 will be given, and the second best will receive £2. Ties to be divided. Selections must be made for all the closed races—naming one horse for each event—on the accompanying form, and sent to the

Editor,
"Sport,"
325, *Strand,*
London, W.C.,

not later than by the first post on Tuesday next, 6th prox. The real names and addresses of the successful competitors to be sent in confidence to the Editor, but a *nom de plume* may be adopted for publication. The result of the competition will appear in Sport of the following week, and the money will be forwarded every Tuesday.

TO BE CUT OUT AND SENT TO THE EDITOR.

WINNERS AT NORTHAMPTON (6th and 7th April, 1880).

	Race.	Horse.
1.	Althorp Park Stakes	.....
2.	Earl Spencer's Plate.....	.....
3.	Northamptonshire Cup.....	.....
4.	Northamptonshire Stakes	.....
5.	Auction Stakes.....	.....
6.	Whittlebury Cup	.....
	Name	.....
	Address	.....

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